



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry**
Australian Quarantine and
Inspection Service

Information Sheet 2
DISABILITY ASSISTANCE DOGS
*Quarantine requirements for the importation of disability
assistance dogs from approved rabies-free countries.*

30 DAYS QUARANTINE SURVEILLANCE IN AUSTRALIA

Australian Quarantine & Inspection Service (AQIS) Live Animal Imports
Phone +61 2 6272 4454 Fax: +61 2 6272 3110
Web: www.daff.gov.au/aqis/cat-dogs Email: animalimp@aqis.gov.au

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are for the importation into Australia of disability assistance dogs. AQIS is responsible for assessing all disability assistance dogs against the eligibility criteria listed below. Should AQIS accept that a dog and its handler meet this criteria an import permit will be granted. The import conditions for disability assistance dogs allow for the quarantine period to be served as "quarantine surveillance" at the disabled person's residence. These conditions allow for the ongoing interaction between the disabled person and their assistance dog.

Under the *Quarantine Services Fees Determination*, all AQIS fees are waived where dogs have been assessed by AQIS as meeting the eligibility criteria set out below.

All dogs entering Australia from countries listed against this information package require an import permit to be granted by AQIS prior to export. An application to import disability assistance dogs into Australia must be submitted to AQIS before an import permit can be granted. The AQIS import permit contains veterinary certificate A and B; which must be completed prior to export.

The steps below provide detailed information for completing the entire process.

Updated September 2009

Please refer to the AQIS website to ensure you have the current version of this document, as import conditions may change.

Step 1: General Eligibility

Time Frame: Confirm eligibility before proceeding with the application to import

Handler's disability and requirement for an assistance dog;

A medical doctor(s) specialising in the area of the handler's disability must provide documentation confirming:

- the handlers disability, and
- the handlers physical dependence on a dog (AQIS allows only one disability assistance dog per handler) for day to day tasks, and
- the dog will be in the continuous service of the handler for at least 6 months prior to export.

This document(s) must be submitted when applying for an AQIS import permit.

Specialised training of the assistance dog;

Disability assistance dogs are limited to dogs licensed by either:

- The [International Guide Dog Federation](#) (IGDF) or
- [Assistance Dogs International](#) (ADI) as a "service", "seizure" or "hearing" dog.

A copy of the dogs licence must be submitted when applying for an AQIS import permit. Please note that ADI dogs require re-assessment every 12 months, as such AQIS can only accept ADI licences granted within 18 months of the import date.

Travel to Australia

In order to demonstrate on-going dependency, dogs and handlers must travel to Australia on the same flight.

An AQIS import permit will not be issued until the required documentation has been provided for assessment by AQIS and the dog/handler found to meet the eligibility criteria. Dogs which do not meet the eligibility criteria may be imported under the standard [import conditions for dogs](#).

Residency: Dogs must have been continuously living in the country of export for a minimum of six (6) months immediately prior to export *or* since direct importation from Australia. The dog must not be under quarantine restriction at the time of export.

Dog Breeds: Under the legislation of the [Australian Customs Service](#), dogs of the following pure-breeds are prohibited and are not eligible for importation into Australia:

- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Brasileiro
- Japanese Tosa
- Pit Bull Terrier or American Pit Bull
- Perro de Presa Canario or Presa Canario

The Australian Customs Service can be contacted on phone: +61 2 6275 6666 or 1300 363 263 (within Australia) or by email: information@customs.gov.au

Step 2: Microchip

Time Frame: *Must be completed before continuing with the import permit process*

Dogs must be identified by a microchip that can be read by an Avid®, Trovan®, Destron® or other ISO compatible reader. The microchip must be implanted before any testing takes place.

AQIS strongly recommends that the dog is scanned at each visit to the veterinarian to ensure that the microchip can be read and is correct prior to export.

If the microchip differs from the AQIS import permit, can not be found or read upon the dog's arrival in Australia, the dog will be re-exported to the country of origin.

It is the importer's responsibility to contact their local Australian council regarding dog registration and microchip requirements. AQIS is unable to provide council details.

Step 3: Apply for an AQIS Import Permit

Time frame: *Once the microchip has been implanted in the dog*

AQIS import permits are valid for six (6) months from the date of issue

- Application information and forms can be found at: www.daff.gov.au/aqis/cat-dogs/application.

Supporting documentation is required for assessing import permit applications. Originals of the documentation are not required.

You may submit your import permit application with all supporting documentation by any of the following methods:

- **eLodge** at: www.daff.gov.au/aqis/import/application/forms. You will need to scan and attach all supporting documentation.
- **Email** a signed and scanned copy of your application to animalimp@aqis.gov.au.
- **Fax** to +61 2 6272 3110
- **Post** to AQIS Live Animal Imports GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia

AQIS aims to grant all import permit applications within ten (10) working days, provided that all required information is received at the time of submission.

Step 4: Locate an Official Government Veterinarian, a Government Approved Veterinarian and a Government Approved Laboratory in the AQIS approved country of export.

Time frame: As soon as possible.

An Official Government Veterinarian: is a government officer usually employed by the government veterinary administration in the exporting country (eg in the UK – Department for Environment Food). Official Government Veterinarians generally do not work in private practice. Official Government Veterinarians are authorised to sign certificates on behalf of their Government's veterinary administration. Official Government Veterinarians endorse Veterinary Certificate A and complete Veterinary Certificate B in the AQIS import permit.

A Government Approved Veterinarian: You should contact the government veterinary administration in your country to determine which veterinarians you can use to prepare the dog for export. The government approved veterinarian will prepare the dog for export to Australia and complete Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit.

Government Approved Laboratories: are approved by the veterinary service in the country of export for testing samples from dogs destined for export. These laboratories may be in another country. However, it must be located within an AQIS approved country.

AQIS does not have a list of Government or Official Veterinarians. To locate appropriate veterinarians and testing laboratories you must contact the government quarantine, agriculture or food departments in the country of export.

You can view a list of useful contact links at www.daff.gov.au/aqis/import/live-animals/links

Step 5: Commence Travel Arrangements

Time frame: As soon as you have received the import permit from AQIS

Your dog can enter Australia at any international port/airport and must be presented to AQIS at this first port of arrival. Once cleared through quarantine by AQIS your dog may be taken on any domestic flight within Australia. You should allow at least 2 hours for AQIS to perform the clearance process on your dog upon your arrival into Australia. Connecting domestic flights should not be booked within 4 hours of the dog's arrival in Australia.

Disability assistance dogs generally travel with their handler in the cabin. You must supply a collar, leash, food and water containers.

Dogs can only trans-ship (change aircraft or vessel) through the following airports:

Amsterdam,
Copenhagen,
Frankfurt
Heathrow

Dogs can also trans-ship through countries that are recognised by AQIS as a 'rabies free territory' (AQIS category 1, 2, 3A or 3B countries only). A list of AQIS approved countries is found at the end of this document.

Trans-shipment may also require approval from the quarantine authority in the country of trans-shipment.

All transport costs are at the expense of the importer.

Step 6: General Vaccinations

Time frame: Between 1 year and 14 days prior to export

Vaccinations must be valid for the entire quarantine period in Australia. All vaccinations must have been administered within an AQIS approved country.

- **Dogs** must be vaccinated against distemper, infectious hepatitis, canine parvovirus (parvo), para-influenza and Bordetella bronchiseptica (kennel cough).

Vaccination against Leptospira interrogans are not recommended as the vaccination can interfere with testing which may result in dogs being ineligible for export to Australia.

Step 7: Ehrlichiosis, External Parasites, Brucellosis, Leptospirosis and Leishmaniosis

Time frame: Within 30 days prior to export

Blood tests: Arrange for a government approved veterinarian to scan the dog's microchip and draw blood samples for the testing of:

- ehrlichiosis (tropical canine pancytopenia)
- brucellosis
- leishmaniosis
- leptospirosis

The microchip number must be recorded on the blood tube and on the laboratory submission form. The blood must be sent to a government-approved laboratory for testing. The laboratory report must be in English, on official letterhead, signed by an authorised officer at the laboratory and link the dog's microchip number to the test result.

If there is no microchip number on the laboratory report or the testing requirements are not met, the dog may be re-exported from Australian Quarantine at the importer's expense.

The results must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit. Copies of all laboratory test results must be endorsed by an Official Government Veterinarian and accompany the dog to Australia.

Contact AQIS if the dog does not meet the test requirements.

Ehrlichiosis: Dogs must be tested for *Ehrlichia canis* infection by the indirect fluorescent antibody test (IFAT). The test must produce a negative result at a dilution of 1:40.

Treatment for external parasites must commence at the same time that blood is sampled for ehrlichia testing as this disease is spread by ticks.

A Government Approved Veterinarian must treat the dog with a long acting acaricide that is registered for the control of ticks such as fiprinol (eg Frontline®) or permethrin (eg Permethrin®). The treatment must kill ticks upon direct contact. Oral products and medicated collars are not satisfactory, neither are products that kill ticks only after biting your dog. Washes and rinses that prevent ticks and tick bites are acceptable.

The treatment must be repeated according to the manufacturer's instructions to the date of export. Treatment must also be repeated within 4 days prior to export. Dates of treatment must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit.

Brucellosis: Dogs must be tested for *Brucella canis* infection using a serum agglutination test. The test must produce a negative result.

Once blood is collected for this test the dog must not be mated or inseminated prior to export to Australia.

Leishmaniosis: Dogs must be tested for *Leishmania infantum* infection by an indirect fluorescent antibody test (IFAT) or an enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA). The test must produce a negative result.

Leptospirosis: Dogs must be tested for *Leptospira canicola* serovar of *Leptospira interrogans* using a microscopic agglutination test.

Dogs that record a negative result (less than 50% agglutination at a serum dilution of 1:100) are eligible for import.

Dogs that record a result of positive at 1:100 or more, but negative at 1:800, must be **re-tested** 14 days or more after the first test. The second test must also show a negative titre result at 1:800 or less.

Dogs that record a result positive at 1:800 or more are ineligible for import.

Vaccination against Leptospira interrogans are not recommended as the vaccination can interfere with testing which may result in dogs being ineligible for export to Australia.

Step 8: Dogs that have ever been in Africa - Babesiosis

Time frame: *Within 28 days prior to export*

This treatment should not be given within 48 hours of treatment for external parasites as the chance of side-effects may increase.

Option 1: A government approved veterinarian must treat the dog **once** with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65[®], Hoechst or Imizol[®] by Coopers) at a rate of 7.5 mg per kg body weight by subcutaneous injection.

Option 2: A government approved veterinarian must treat the dog **twice** with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65[®], Hoechst or Imizol[®] by Coopers) at a rate of 6.6 mg per kg body weight by subcutaneous injection given two weeks apart.

Details of treatment/s must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit.

Step 9: Internal and External Parasite Treatment

Time frame: *Within 4 days prior to export. This can be done at the same time as the completion of Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit*

Internal parasites: Dogs must be treated with a product approved for the treatment of nematodes and cestodes (eg Drontal[®]).

Internal parasite treatment must be effective against roundworm, hookworm, whipworm and tapeworm.

External parasites: Dogs must be treated with a product approved for the treatment of ticks and fleas. The treatment must kill ticks upon direct contact.

Oral products, injections and medicated collars are not satisfactory nor are products that rely on the tick biting the dog. Washes, rinses and spot on products that kill ticks on contact are acceptable.

Dogs: You must have already commenced external parasite treatment for dogs, as per Step 7. The dog must be retreated for external parasites within 4 days prior to export.

The product name, active ingredient, dose rate and treatment date/s must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A of the AQIS import permit.

Step 10: Completion of Veterinary Certificate A Including Pre-Export Inspection

Time frame: *Within 4 days prior to export*

Veterinary Certificates A and B are included in the granted AQIS Import Permit.

Veterinary Certificate A is to be completed by a Government Approved Veterinarian or an Official Government Veterinarian.

You must bring the dog and all documentation (eg. vaccination certificates, laboratory reports) to this inspection. The dog must be free from clinical signs of infectious or contagious diseases.

A thorough examination for external parasites, including visible or palpable ticks, must be performed by the approved veterinarian. Particular attention should be given to the forelegs, chest, neck, head, ears, eyes, shoulders, axillae and inner thighs. The dog must be fit to undertake the journey to Australia.

Any corrections to the approved veterinarian's entries on Veterinary Certificate A will only be accepted if the original entry has been struck through and remains legible – correction fluid must not be used. An Official Government Veterinarian must sign to each correction.

The AQIS import permit must not be altered.

Step 11: Notify AQIS of the Intended Arrival of Your Dog

Time Frame: At least 3 working days before your dog arrives in Australia

At least 3 working days before your dog arrives in Australia the following information must be faxed to the AQIS office;

(contact details can be found at; <http://www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/about/contact>) in the state that you and your dog will arrive in Australia:

- A copy of the valid AQIS Import Permit
- Copy of the laboratory reports for Brucella, Ehrlichia, Leptospira and Leishmania
- Copy of completed veterinary certificate A showing the repeated treatment for ticks
- Copy of your dog's vaccination certificate(s)
- Flight details, including flight number, port of departure, port of arrival time and date of arrival. Please also record whether your dog will arrive as manifest cargo or in the cabin.

AQIS will fax or e-mail you a response that confirms if your dog is eligible for import with the documentation supplied. The dog must not be loaded on the airplane until confirmation from AQIS has been received. If these requirements are not met or the documentation is unsatisfactory the dog may be refused entry to Australia and/or ordered into quarantine at a government quarantine facility on arrival.

Arrangements will be made for an AQIS officer to meet you and your dog on arrival.

Step 12: Microchip scan, completion of Veterinary Certificate B

Time frame: After the completion of Veterinary Certificate A, usually on the day of departure.

Veterinary Certificate B must be completed by an Official Government Veterinarian. The following documents must be presented to the Official Government Veterinarian to be signed and stamped (endorsed) and then travel with the dog to Australia.

- Original or copy of the AQIS import permit
- Completed Veterinary Certificate A
- General vaccination certificates
- Brucellosis, ehrlichiosis, leishmania and leptospirosis laboratory reports in English
- Confirmation of eligibility letter from AQIS

Copies may be used. However, the paperwork arriving in Australia with your dog must bear original signatures and stamps.

An Official Government Veterinarian must scan the dog and confirm that the microchip number is consistent on the AQIS import permit and all supporting documents. If the microchip number is consistent, the veterinarian must record the number on Veterinary Certificate B.

If the microchip number is incorrect on the AQIS import permit and/or supporting documentation OR the microchip is absent and cannot be scanned, the dog is ineligible for import.

Step 13: Check Dog in with the Airline

Time frame: Please check with your airline

The AQIS import permit, Veterinary Certificates A and B, and blood test results must travel to Australia with your dog. These documents may be originals or copies but must bear the original signature and stamp of the Official Veterinarian.

On Arrival in Australia

Neither the disability assist dog nor the handler may leave the international airport before being cleared by an AQIS officer. An AQIS officer will meet you on arrival and cross-check all documentation. You will also have to:

- Sign the Disabled Persons Declaration
- Make your dog available for examination

If the documentation is incomplete or unsatisfactory, or if the dog is showing signs of disease or infestation with external parasites, the AQIS officer may require that the dog is retreated, or order it into quarantine at a government operated animal quarantine station, or order the dog to be exported .

If the documentation is satisfactory, the AQIS officer will endorse the Disabled Persons Declaration and will release the dog under quarantine surveillance. The AQIS officer shall retain the signed Disabled Persons Declaration but will provide a copy to the handler.

The dog must then serve thirty (30) days under AQIS quarantine surveillance. AQIS may visit the nominated address at any point during the period of quarantine surveillance.

During quarantine or while under quarantine surveillance (the details of which are set out in the Disabled Persons Declaration) the dog may be subject to additional testing or treatments, as specified by AQIS, at the importers expense.

On the proposed end date of the quarantine surveillance the dog will be examined by a veterinarian who must complete the "Report to AQIS on the health of a disability assistance dog completing post arrival quarantine surveillance" form and return it to AQIS.

Dogs returning to Australia

The UK pet travel scheme (PETS) also known as the pet passport scheme, does not apply to dogs returning to Australia. All dogs must meet the AQIS import conditions.

Visit the following webpage for more information: www.daff.gov.au/aqis/cat-dogs/returning

AQIS cannot guarantee that dogs exported from Australia will be eligible for re-import.

Dogs exported from Australia immediately relinquish their Australian status.

Exported dogs may be exposed to exotic diseases and may not be eligible for direct re-import to Australia.

Only dogs in an **AQIS approved country may** be eligible for direct return to Australia.

All dogs that are eligible for re-import must complete a period of quarantine within Australia.

AQIS Approved Countries

Approved Rabies-Free Countries and Territories - No Quarantine Required

- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- New Zealand
- Norfolk Island

Approved Rabies-Free Countries and Territories Minimum of 30 Days Quarantine (Information Package 2)

- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Bahrain | • Barbados | • Cyprus | • Falkland Islands |
| • Fiji | • French Polynesia | • Guam | • Hawaii |
| • Iceland | • Ireland | • Japan | • Malta |
| • Mauritius | • New Caledonia | • Norway | • Singapore |
| • Sweden | • Taiwan | • The United Kingdom | • Vanuatu |

Approved Rabies-Free Island Countries and Territories Minimum of 60 Days Quarantine (Information Package 3A)

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| • American Samoa | • Federated States of Micronesia | • Kiribati |
| • Papua New Guinea | • Solomon Islands | • Wallis and Futuna |
| | | • Western Samoa |

Approved Rabies-Free Island Countries and Territories which may not have an official veterinary service Minimum of 60 Days Quarantine (Information Package 3B)

- | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| • Christmas Island | • Cook Islands | • Kingdom of Tonga | • Nauru |
| • Niue | • Palau | • Tuvalu | |

Approved Countries and Territories recognised by the Australian Government as Countries and Territories in which dog mediated rabies is absent or well controlled. Quarantine Time Varies & Rabies Vaccination (Information Package 4)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Antigua and Barbuda | • Argentina | • Austria | • Bahamas |
| • Belgium | • Bermuda | • British Virgin Islands | • Brunei |
| • Bulgaria | • Canada | • Canary/Balearic Islands | • Cayman Islands |
| • Chile | • Croatia | • Czech Republic | • Denmark |
| • France | • Finland | • Germany | • Greece |
| • Greenland | • Hong Kong | • Hungary | • Israel |
| • Italy | • Jamaica | • Kuwait | • Luxembourg |
| • Macau | • Malaysia (Peninsular, Sabah & Sarawak only) | • Monaco | • Netherlands |
| • Montenegro | • Netherlands – Antilles and Aruba | • Netherland | • Qatar |
| • Poland | • Portugal | • Puerto Rico | • Seychelles |
| • Reunion | • Saipan | • Serbia | • Spain |
| • Slovakia | • Slovenia | • South Korea | • St Vincent and the Grenadines |
| • St Kitts and Nevis | • St Lucia | • St Vincent and the Grenadines | • United Arab Emirates |
| • Switzerland (including Liechtenstein) | | • Trinidad and Tobago | • Uruguay |
| • United States of America (not including Hawaii) | | • US Virgin Islands | |

All Other Countries - Non-Approved

*AQIS does not allow the direct importation of dogs from non-approved countries. The importation can only occur indirectly via an AQIS approved country. Dogs must be continuously resident in an AQIS approved country for a minimum of six months prior to export to Australia. Dogs then become eligible for import into Australia under the AQIS import conditions that apply to that particular approved country. AQIS **will not** accept any vaccinations or blood testing that is completed in a non-approved country.*